

## **SOCY1 - Introduction to Sociology**

Professor: Robin Gabriel

Classroom: Cowell 134

Time: 1:00pm - 4:30pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays

Office hours: by appointment

### **Course Description**

A systematic study of social groups ranging in size from small to social institutions to entire societies. Organized around the themes of social interaction, social inequality, and social change. Fulfills lower-division major requirement.

### **Organizing themes**

This class discusses settler colonialism as a central framework for understanding the societies we study, including the one we currently inhabit. We are operating from the position that settler colonialism is inherently harmful to all involved, but particularly to the original inhabitants of the land. Since my research is on Palestine (particularly Palestinians living in North America/Turtle Island), in this class, we will use sociological tools to better understand how these societies function and, thus, to diagnose and understand their problems to strategize how we may attempt to solve them together.

All viewpoints are welcome in this course if they are communicated respectfully. We will establish community guidelines for respectful discussion and a generative learning environment together on the first day of class!

All viewpoints are welcome in this course if folks communicate their perspectives respectfully. If you disagree, you're welcome to stay here and disagree respectfully; if that's not something you're interested in doing, there are other courses that may be more appropriate for you.

### **Community Guidelines**

Our group's agreed-upon community guidelines:

1. Our goal is to learn and overcome things we've learned that are not true/helpful - not to fight each other. Assuming best intentions - leading with care.
2. Let people finish their thoughts - don't cut people off. Don't shame folks for partially formed thoughts, either!

3. Be open to new ideas - even if they may differ from yours. It's ok to ask clarifying questions!
4. Learn when to step back and let others speak
5. Hook + hand raise

### **Grading break-down**

1. Weekly reading logs (**30%**)
  1. Students will submit a reading log for each of the assigned readings. I highly encourage you to work on these with each other! Reading with others and discussing the conclusions and arguments is a great learning strategy. I expect that your reading logs will look similar, but they should not be identical.
2. Lecture attendance (**30%**)
  1. It might seem simple, but being in the physical learning space with your colleagues is super important - we learn *with* and *from* each other. If you have to miss a class, please reach out to me ASAP so we can arrange an alternative way for you to participate!
3. Weekly critical response (**40%** of your total grade)
  1. These are due by the start of class the following week - for example, you'll be turning in your first-week reflection by 1 pm on Tuesday of week 2
4. Extra credit
  1. Democracy Now weekly reports (5 possible, each worth .5% for a possible total of **2.5%** final grade increase - you can also do these as a group, where members take turns writing the report)

How your learning is assessed in this course is of enormous importance. As you can see in the "Grading Breakdown" page in this module, you're being graded on three core categories:

1. **reading comprehension** (30% of your grade)
  1. An easy way for me to know if you are reading and understanding the main points of the readings assigned to you for each class is if you can summarize them for me. These reading logs might feel a little tedious, but they're also showing you what to look out for as you read - a skill that you will carry with you to other courses!
  2. These logs also help you participate meaningfully in class discussion of the readings. You already have talking/thinking points in front of you when the time comes to "share out", and

hearing/seeing what your colleagues are writing will also help you become a better critical reader!

2. **studying together** (30% of your grade)

1. As I said on the "Grading Breakdown" page, a significant portion of your grade is actually just showing up to class. Black Studies scholars Fred Moten and Stefano Harney argue that one of the most important outcomes of attending universities is how they connect us to each other and provide a forum through which we can study together. They define "study" in the following way:

[S]tudy is what you do with other people. It's talking and walking around with other people, working, dancing, suffering, some irreducible convergence of all three, held under the name of speculative practice... The point of calling it 'study' is to mark that the incessant and irreversible intellectuality of these activities is already present. (p. 110, *The Undercommons*)

Clearly, although we don't need a classroom space to engage in study, for our purposes, this is a crucial site.

1. **Critical thinking, theoretical application, and writing skills** (40% of your grade)

1. At the end of every module (week), you will write a critical reflection of what we have discussed, using it to reflect on your own life and social experiences. You will be integrating the texts from the week (another way the reading logs can be helpful!!).

**Late Work Policy**

It's hard to be rigid with deadlines when there are so many overlapping and intersecting crises in our worlds right now. With that being said, Summer classes move SO fast; falling a little behind can make the difference between passing and failing.

With that being said, you will not be penalized for late work as long as you communicate with me in advance of the deadline. My primary concern is with y'all's capacity to catch up by the end of the term (especially if you're taking multiple classes), so I encourage you to turn in work as early/soon as you possibly can.

\* if you have DRC accommodations, you do not have to let me know in advance if you will be submitting your work within the allotted time range

**Accommodations**

All of us have distinct needs in terms of our learning, and I find that when we center the diverse needs of students, all of us benefit. Whether you have official DRC accommodations or not, I am here to make sure our learning environment is accessible to you! While I do not plan to record our classes, I will make my slides available to you before each class meeting. There are also some great [assistive technologies](#) available to students at UCSC, and others that are free for the public to use, such as [Natural Reader](#) (my personal favorite) and [Speechify](#), among others. Please let me know how I, as your instructor, can make this class more accessible to you!

\*if you have official accommodations through the DRC office, please be in touch with me about that ASAP

## **Weekly Schedule + Topics**

### **Week 1 - the sociological imagination, theory, and how we “do” sociology**

- Lecture 1: what is sociology, how does it relate to us as individuals, and how can theory help us make sense of it all?
- Reading:
  1. Hernan Vera, Joe Feagan, and Kimberly Ducey, “Introduction” in *Liberation Sociology, 3e*
  2. Aldon Morris, “Introduction: Race and the Birth of American Sociology” in *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B DuBois and the Birth of Modern Sociology*
- Lecture 2: Sociological methods + the purpose of Sociology
- Reading:
  1. Rachel Herzing, “[Political Education in a Time of Rebellion](#)”
  2. Michael Burawoy, [Sociology Faces the Question of Palestine](#)

### **Week 2 - social positioning: race, gender, and colonization**

- Lecture 1: identity, race, and colonization in the US + beyond
- Reading:
  1. Omi & Wynant “Racial Formation Theory”
  2. Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, “[Decolonizing the Mind](#)”
- Lecture 2: positionality and gender
- Reading:
  1. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (1990)
  2. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, “The Biopolitics of Israeli Settler Colonialism: Palestinian Bedouin Children Theorise the Present”

### **Week 3 - institutions: education, politics, and economy**

- Lecture 1: What are institutions, and how do they impact our behavior?
- Reading:
  1. Miller, Seumas, "Social Institutions," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.)
  2. Maya Wind, "Introduction" from *Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom*
  
- Lecture 2: Democracy and Inequality
- Reading:
  1. Robin D.G. Kelley - [What Did Cedric Robinson Mean by Racial Capitalism?](#)
  2. Salim Tamari - [Building Other People's Homes: The Palestinian Peasant's Household and Work in Israel](#)

### **Week 4 - healthcare and (dis)ability**

- Lecture 1: Healthcare systems
- Reading:
  1. Martin, D., Nettleton, S., Buse, C., Prior, L., & Twigg, J. (2015). Architecture and health care: a place for sociology. *Sociology of health & illness*, 37(7), 1007-1022.
  2. Ayyash, M. Muhannad (2020) "A Pandemic in an Age of Omnipresent Sovereign Power: the Plight of Palestine" *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies*, 41:123-131.
  
- Lecture 2: Ablism, access, and disability rights
- Reading:
  1. Schalk, S., & Kim, J. B. (2020). Integrating race, transforming feminist disability studies. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 46(1), 31-55.
  2. Laura Jordan Jaffee, "[Disrupting global disability frameworks: settler-colonialism and the geopolitics of disability in Palestine/Israel](#)"

### **Week 5 - social control: Carcerality and policing**

- Lecture 1: Social control, discipline, and the role of prisons
- Reading:
  1. Beth E. Richie, "Introduction" from *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America's Prison Nation*

2. Bornstein, Avram. (2010) "Palestine Prison Ontologies" in *Dialectical Anthropology*, 34:459-472

- Lecture 2: Policing

- Reading:

1. Potter, Gary (2013) "The History of Policing in the United States"
2. Cops off Campus Coalition, UCSD - [History of Policing](#)